

CHAPTER 4

DISPLAYS AND EXHIBITS

Overview

Introduction

At times, a display or exhibit is the appropriate way to communicate with a large audience. You must plan your displays and exhibits to present a professional and careful arrangement.

Objectives

The material in this chapter enables you to do the following:

- Evaluate the location or space to set up a display or exhibit.
 - Recognize the differences between displays and exhibits.
 - Distinguish between the impact of displays or exhibits and presentations.
 - Identify a target audience for a display or exhibit.
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In this chapter

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Displays

Introduction

A display illustrates a process, an evolution, or a development. Displays may be simple or elaborate. A display may be a chart for hanging in a passageway or a series of posters in a spacious Quarterdeck. The impact of a display depends upon your ability to organize material into a comprehensive statement.

Displays

The material for a display should have a central theme or message. Set up a display when the intended audience is transitory and large, and the material is general in nature. You do not need to advertise a display. You can create a display that is loud and colorful or sedate and somber. Let the nature of the material dictate the overall mood. Displays allow audiences to sift through information and focus on information that interests them. Displays can make the audience feel like a participant.

Location

Select a spacious and secure area with maximum pedestrian traffic, such as a Quarterdeck, conference room, or passageway. Plan the placement of the display material where it can be seen and read without choking traffic flow or interfering with set routine. Place the display items at the eye level of the average viewer. If display items are fragile or highly pilferable, arrange for a secure enclosure. Locate items in secure enclosures away from the main traffic areas to encourage lingering without creating a choke point.

Presentation

The material presented in a display should be professional in appearance. The quality of lettering, in particular, is an indication of the ability of the draftsmen who created the display. Keep all labels in the same typeface and on the same size and color of card. When you vary letter style, make it a part of the display design. Mount illustrations and photographs without bubbles or wrinkles. Cut the edges of presented material with a sharp knife blade. Remove feathered edges and correct crooked ones. Keep all presentation materials clean and ready for the next show.

Exhibits

Introduction

An exhibit is a presentation of a body of work. Exhibitions are similar to displays, with subtle differences. You will not often have an occasion to set up an exhibit, but you should know the fine line between a display and exhibit.

Exhibits

The work in the exhibit may be by one creator or by many creators in one style. There need not be an overriding theme. For example, an exhibition of Salvadore Dali will have only work created by Dali but, an exhibition of Surrealists will contain work by Dali, Magritte, and other artists in the same school of thought. Exhibits are usually somber, surrounded by as much neutrality as possible so as not to interfere with the impact of the work presented. Exhibits are intended for large, transitory audiences with a fundamental interest in the material on exhibit. Advertise an exhibit to create pre-opening interest.

Location

Locate an exhibit near heavily trafficked areas. Keep the exhibit room quiet, scrupulously clean, and the room temperature cool. Select a spacious and secure area, such as a conference room or classroom. When an exhibit closes, you should be able to lock the space.

Hanging

Introduction

Items in a display or exhibit should present a professional appearance. Mount all illustrations and photographs. Although not mandatory, consider matting and framing the work. Arrange the material either chronologically or by a theme. Pay attention to the way you direct the viewer's line of sight.

Hanging images

Hang material to a common reference point. The four basic reference points are the vertical or horizontal center line, the flush base or top, the grid arrangement or a stepped arrangement. Place all material at the eye level of the average viewer. Leave a large amount of space between each item. Make sure all presented work is clean and free of defects. Keep the exhibit room quiet, scrupulously clean, and the room temperature cool.

VERTICAL or HORIZONTAL CENTER LINE: A vertical or horizontal arrangement of elements is the strongest presentation. Vertical arrangements are more active than horizontal arrangements. A horizontal center line of an image is its optical center which is approximately 1/10th above the mathematical center. Locate the horizontal axis of a horizontal arrangement approximately 5 1/2 feet from the floor.

Figure 4-1 shows a horizontal arrangement and a vertical arrangement.

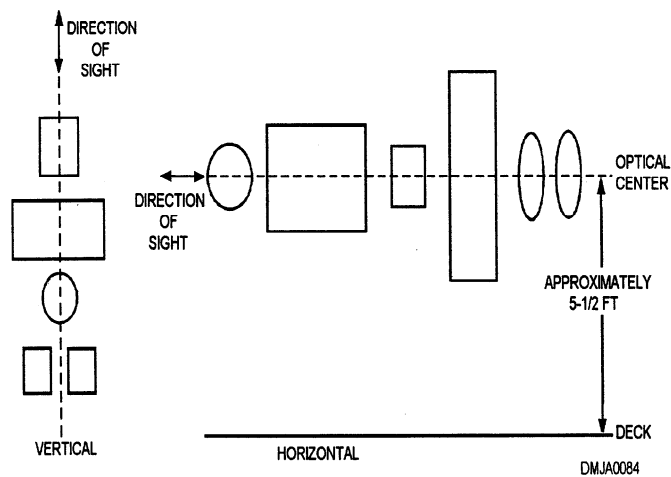


Figure 4-1. —A common vertical and horizontal reference point.

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Hanging, Continued

Hanging images (Continued) BASE or TOP FLUSH EDGE: The flush edge arrangement is most often found in more formal settings such as museums and art shows. Select an arbitrary height at which to hang the images and consider the average eye level. Do not hang images closer than 18 inches from the ceiling. A viewer easily progresses through images with one image leading into another.

Figure 4-2 shows a flush arrangement of images with the common reference points at the top and at the base.

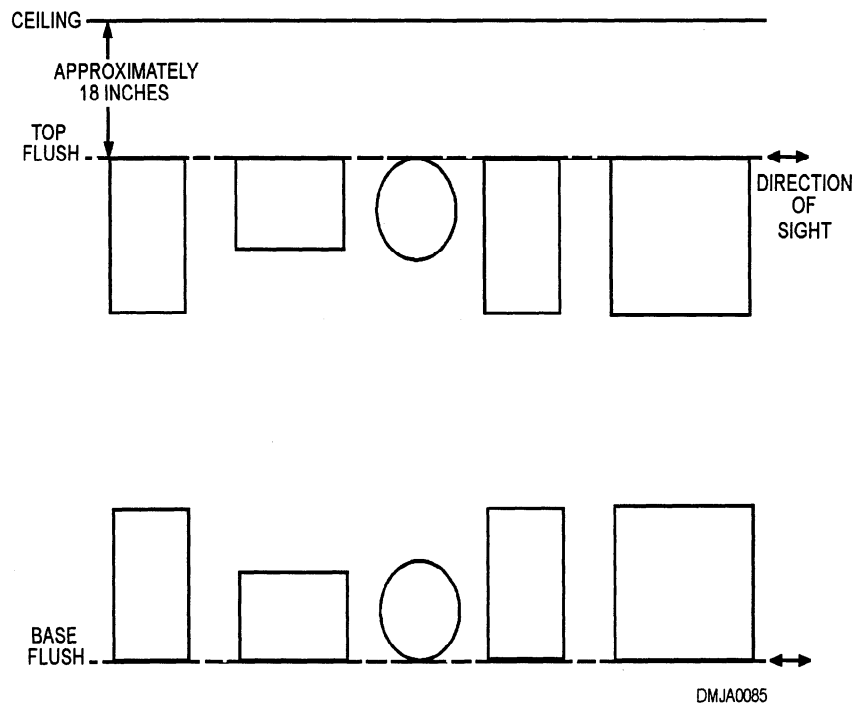


Figure 4-2. —A flush edge common reference point.

Continued on next page

Hanging, Continued

Hanging images (Continued)

GRID ARRANGEMENT: A gridded arrangement is the most dynamic arrangement particularly if the items are irregularly sized. This arrangement is also the best choice for unrelated display items. Divide the display area or wall into sections or a grid. Place the most important work in the center and place the other work on the cross sections of the grid. This technique draws viewers in and directs their line of sight toward the center.

Figure 4-3 shows a gridded arrangement.

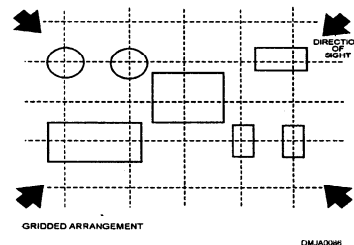


Figure 4-3. —Cross sections of the grid direct the placement of images.

STEPPED or DIAGONAL ARRANGEMENT: A stepped or diagonal arrangement is the most difficult arrangement to create successfully. It is hard to follow and requires some effort on the part of the viewer. The viewer's line of sight is led away from other images toward the floor or ceiling. Use it sparingly.

Figure 4-4 shows a stepped or diagonal arrangement.

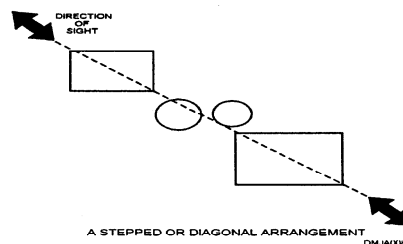


Figure 4-4. —A stepped or diagonal can direct a viewer's attention away from the image.

Cataloging

Introduction

Displays and exhibits require some form of identification. Even the simplest display can turn into a nightmare when you must return the items or retrieve items for an additional display.

Marking

Annotate a display as you would other artwork retained on file. Include in the information you write on display material, the date, any copyright material, and the sequence number of the display. Mark display or exhibit items you retain in storage or in the shop. Mark them inconspicuously on the back in the lower-right corner. Use a pencil or another media that will not bleed or stain through. It is not customary to retain original art from an exhibit. It is usually sold or returned to the owners who have lent it. For retained art from an exhibit, mark it as you would other art in the file and include in the information recorded, the year of creation, the media, the foundation, the overall size, any series numbers, and the name of the artist.

Storing

Introduction	Artwork, if not properly stored and protected, will deteriorate and ruin. If you retain art for regularly staged displays or exhibits, make sure it is safe from water and excessive heat. Make sure the artwork is away from high traffic areas and protected from rats, roaches, and moths.
Preparation	Before you store art after a display or exhibition, clean it. Remove fingerprints, smudges, and dust balls. Fingerprints and dust accelerate the deterioration of the media. Direct and intense light also prematurely age media. Mark the art and wrap it in a soft protective tissue or ph-neutral paper. Mark the protective paper so that you can easily tell what the contents are.
Temperature	Store the protected work in a cool, dry area. Professional storage facilities should have hermetically protected rooms to control temperature and humidity.
Storage	Store artwork off the deck. Select a location that offers protection without wedging it between pipes or lagging. Place the art where there is the least amount of traffic or movement. Roaches and other types of bugs are drawn to the flavorful egg and milk emulsions in some media, such as poster paints, gouache, and tempura. Keep the storage room clean and regularly sprayed for bugs.

Summary

Review

This chapter addresses the differences in displays and exhibits. Careful marking and storage of display and exhibit items will ensure their availability for the next setup.

Comments

Displays can be fun. They should be positive experiences for you and for the audience, even when the subject is serious. You have a great deal of freedom in tactics and strategy. You can let your imagination go. The point is to draw attention to the information. Don't let a display inhibit you. After all, you have been creating displays, albeit in their simplest form, since you designed the bulletin board in elementary school.

Exhibits may be scary if the work displayed is your own. This should be your best work. You are not only showing your artistic prowess, but also revealing your most personal feelings. If the work is not yours, your understanding of the body of the work should guide you in organizing the exhibit.

Most ships and stations offer many opportunities for displays and exhibits. Conference rooms, classrooms, passageways, and gedunks all have displays or commemorative memorabilia. Nearly every Quarterdeck has a testimony to the accomplishments or the history of the ship/station. Keep an eye on your Quarterdeck. Take the initiative. Don't allow that hallowed area to become a tattered eyesore. Look for the opportunities to display and exhibit.

